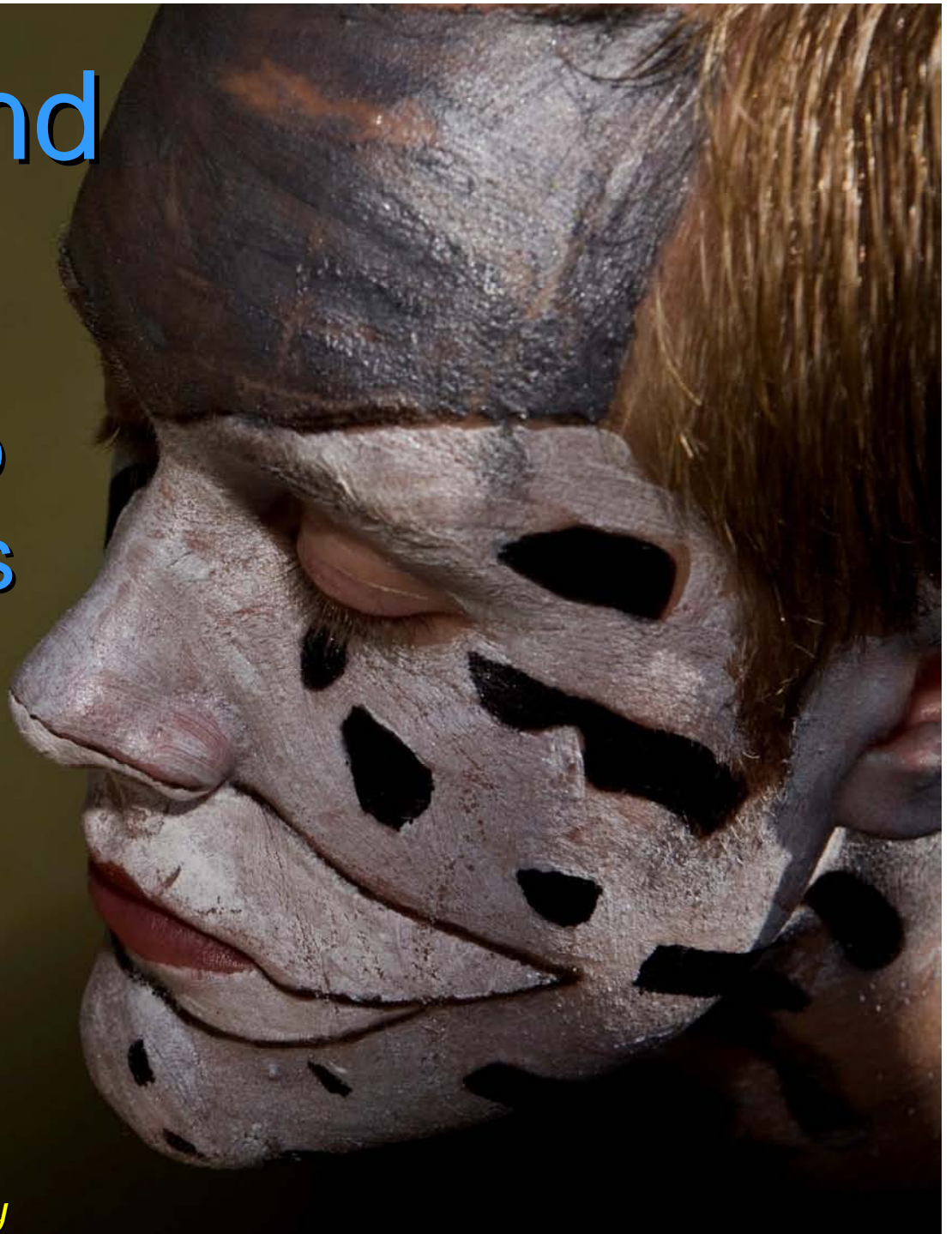


Terrapins and Tybee

Bridging the gap
between citizens
and chelonians

Jordan M. Gray

Armstrong Atlantic State University





The RRR's



Research, Rearing, and Rescue Awareness Programs

- **T.E.R³.P.S**

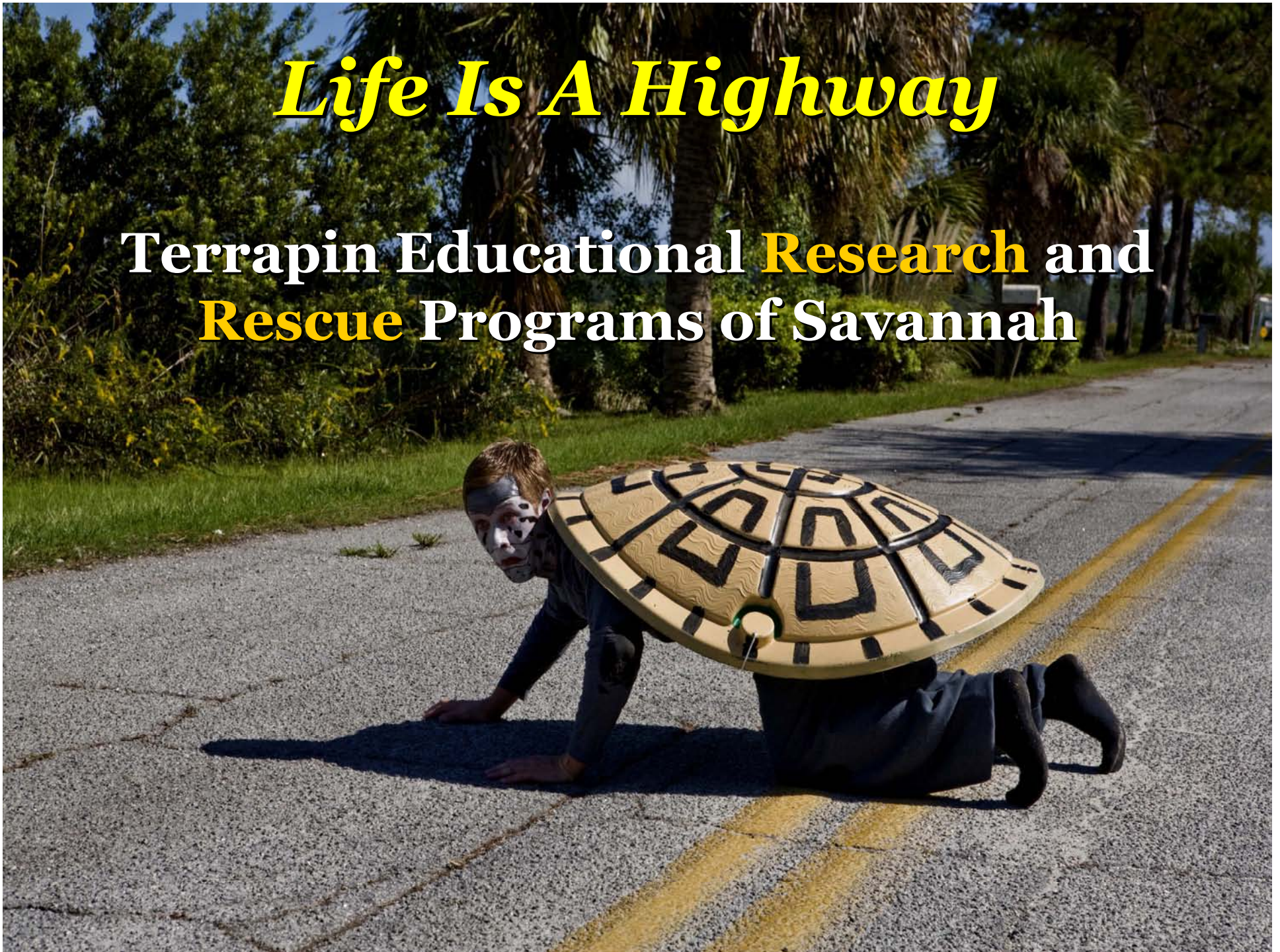
- Terrapin Educational **Research** Program of Savannah

- Terrapin Educational **Rearing** Program of Savannah

- Terrapin Emergency **Rescue** Patrol of Savannah

Life Is A Highway

Terrapin Educational **Research** and
Rescue Programs of Savannah



Results 2005-2007

• 2005

- 260 (+) terrapin highway occurrences
 - Female and juvenile mortalities*
 - 20 live individuals
 - » 11 injured females

• 2006

- 128 (+) terrapin highway occurrences
 - 80 female, 1 male, and 27 juvenile mortalities
 - 12 female and 3 juvenile live individuals
 - » 6 injured females

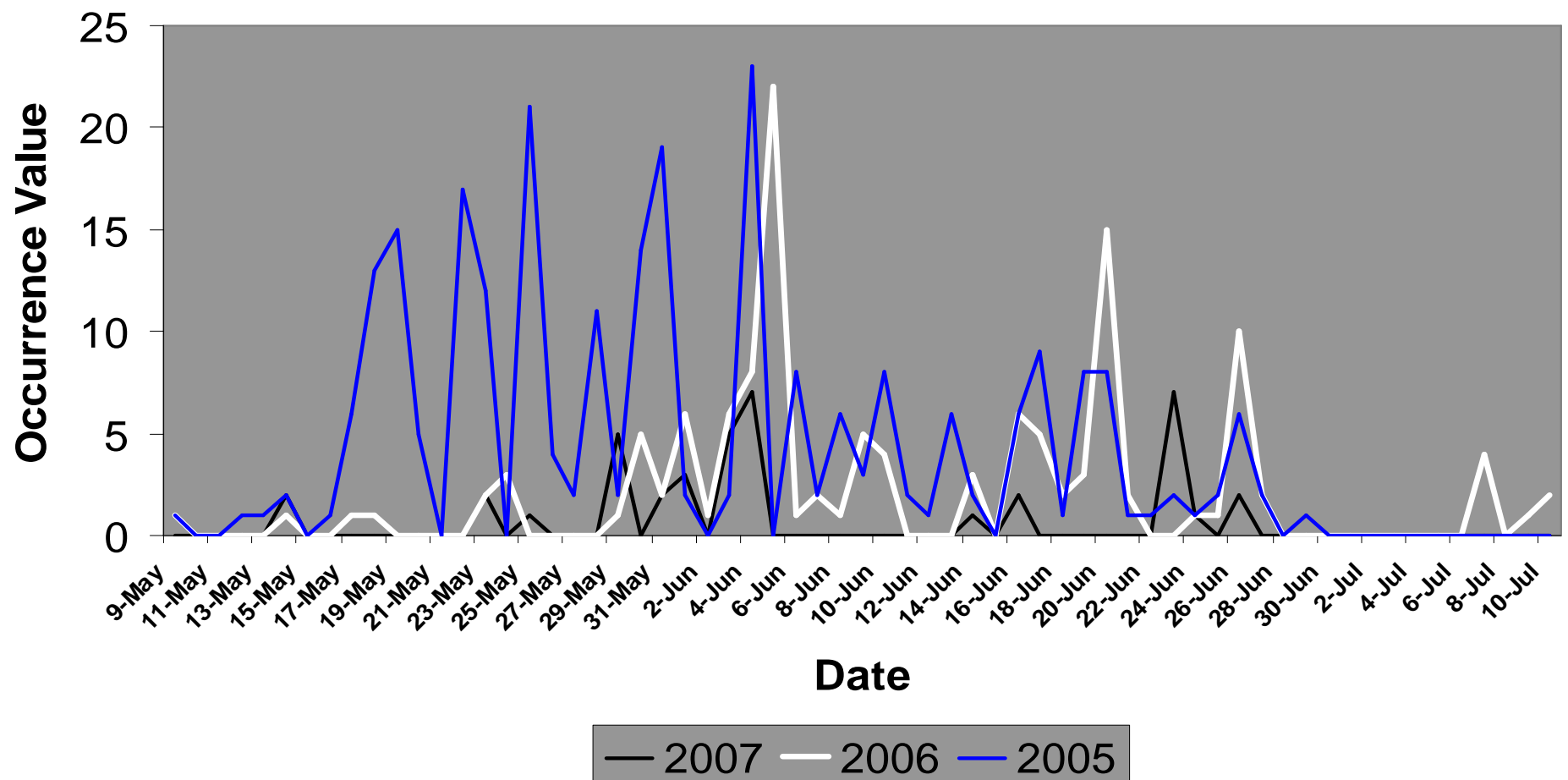
• 2007

- 37 (+) terrapin highway occurrences*
 - 35 female and 2 juvenile mortalities
 - 0 live individuals
 - » 1 injured female



Terrapin Highway Occurrences

Terrapin Highway Occurrences 2005-2007



U.S. Highway 80 Terrapin “Hot Zones”



Image © 2007 DigitalGlobe

Streaming ||||| 100%

© 2007 Google™

Pointer 32°01'15.12" N 80°54'29.90" W

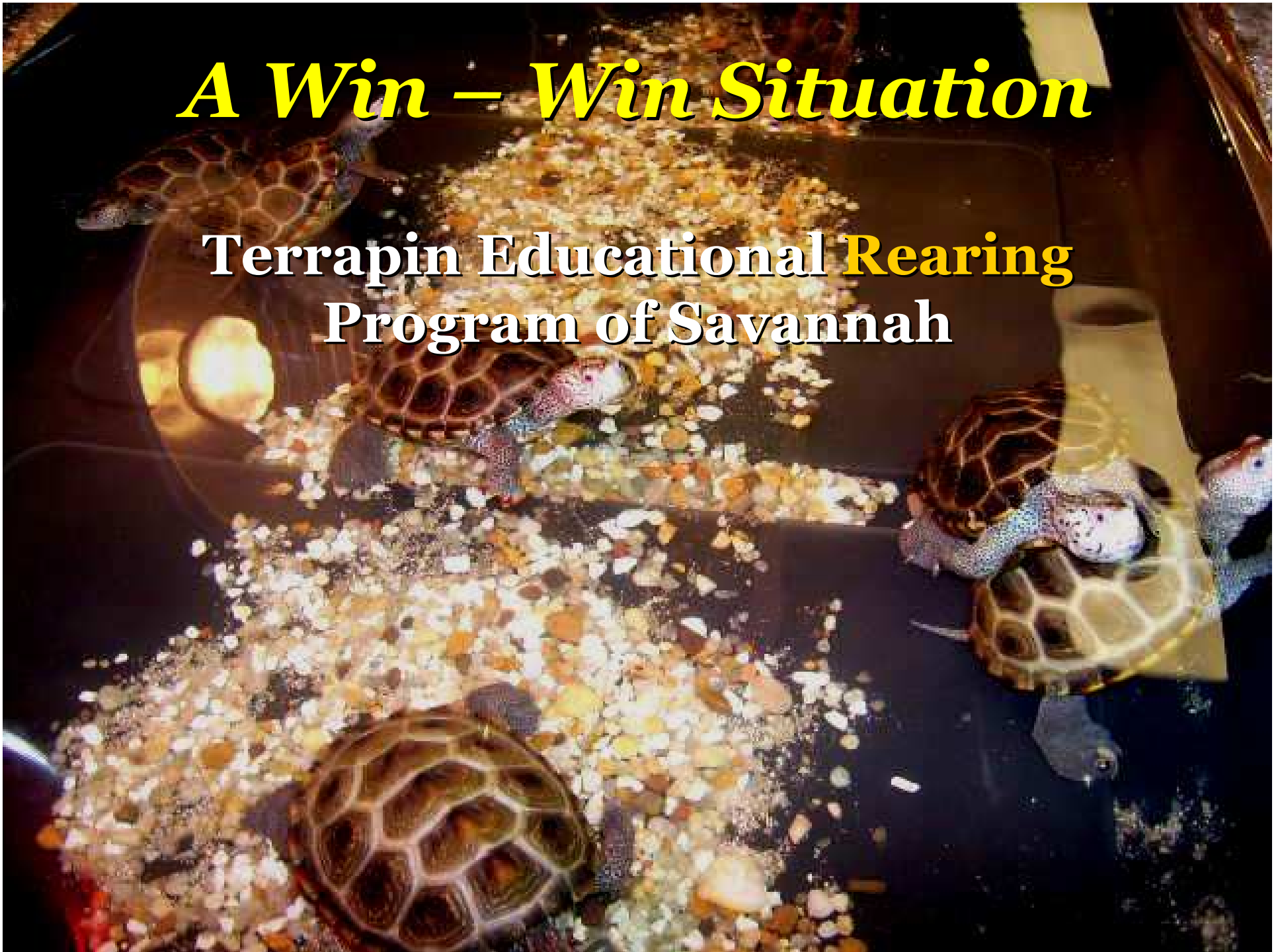
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Rescue and Rehabilitation

- **Injured terrapins given medical treatment and rehabilitation by Dr. Terry Norton and accompanying staff at the St. Catherines Island Center and the Georgia Sea Turtle Center**
 - **Rehabilitated terrapins offer good public relations opportunities to increase awareness of auto strikes with terrapins**

A Win – Win Situation

**Terrapin Educational Rearing
Program of Savannah**



AASU's Project Diamondback

- 2004-2005 : 42 juveniles released
- 2005-2006 : 31 juveniles released
- 2006-2007 : 77 juveniles released
- 2007-2008 : 15 juveniles current
- 20 volunteers have participated in the rearing and release program
- Garnered several areas of media attention



Prism Grant - Terrapin Program

- **Bartlett Middle School**

- Six grade students raise two terrapins
- Seventh grade students raise two terrapins
- Students learn about conservation, ecology, husbandry, water quality, and collect weekly morphometric data



Prism Grant - Terrapin Program

- **Current results:**

- Students active with terrapin husbandry and weekly measurements
- Academic maturity seen in students working with terrapins
- Eagerness to work with and learn more about terrapins

How and Where Can We Educate?



Sites of Terrapin Education

- **Tybee Island Marine Science Center**
 - Terrapin demonstrations
 - Marsh ecology walks
 - Adult and captive reared-for-release terrapins displays
 - Crab trap with excluder device demonstration and fitting program
 - Information about the DTWG, terrapin biology and ecology, and threats to terrapin survival



Sites of Terrapin Education

- **Oatland Island Wildlife Center**
 - Crab trap excluder fitting program
 - Future plans for outdoor marsh terrapin educational exhibit
- **Burton 4-H Center**
 - Adult and hatchling terrapins on hand for educational demonstrations and viewing
- **Skidaway Marine Institute and Aquarium**

Additional Education

- **Public programs**
- **School visits**

Media Is A Must





When Driving on the Causeway:

- 1: Watch out for
Turtles!**
- 2: Do not Follow the
Car in Front of You
Closely**
- 3: Slow Down!**



- **(11)** Newspaper articles and newsletters featured in the Savannah Morning News, the Augusta Chronicle, the Tybee Times, the Tybee Breeze, the Inkwell, and the TWATL
- **(5)** Televised times of coverage by television news including the WTOC news, WSAV news, WTOC TV's Mid-Morning Live, and the AASU Video Profiles
- **(1)** Magazine Article featured in The South magazine

A photograph of a highway with a concrete barrier and a grassy shoulder. The highway is paved and curves into the distance. A concrete barrier runs along the edge of the road, separating it from a grassy shoulder. In the background, there are trees and a clear sky.

Let's Try to Fix the Problem

**Highway Alterations, Wildlife
Barriers, and Motorist Awareness**

Working With the DOT

- Highway expansion and alterations
- Meetings for public interest and input
- Collaborate on ideas for incorporation of wildlife barriers, wildlife crossings, terrapin nesting slopes, and floral plantings
- **Status: U.S. Highway 80 expansion project currently shelved with no scheduled commencement date**

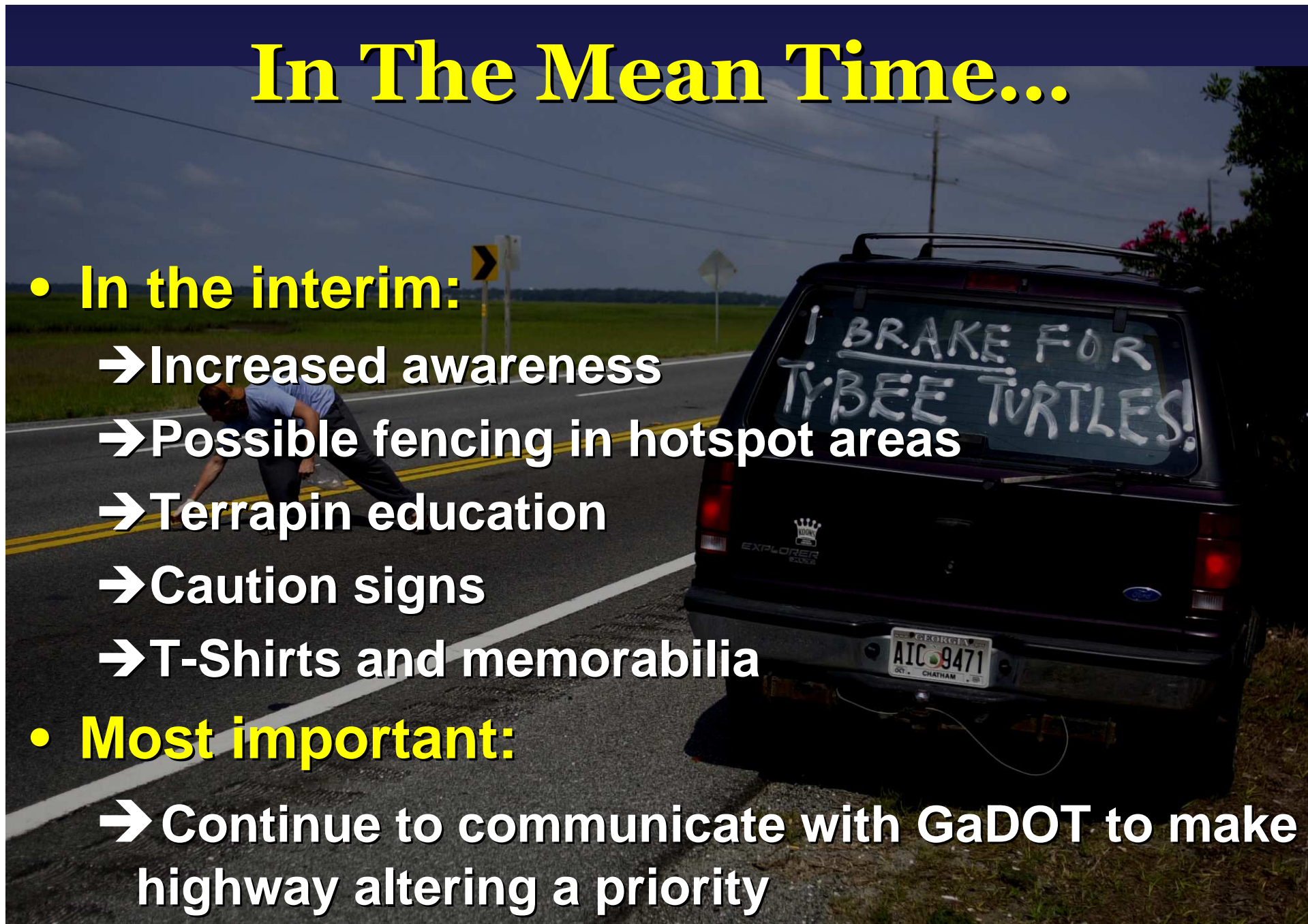
In The Mean Time...

- **In the interim:**

- Increased awareness
- Possible fencing in hotspot areas
- Terrapin education
- Caution signs
- T-Shirts and memorabilia

- **Most important:**

- Continue to communicate with GaDOT to make highway altering a priority

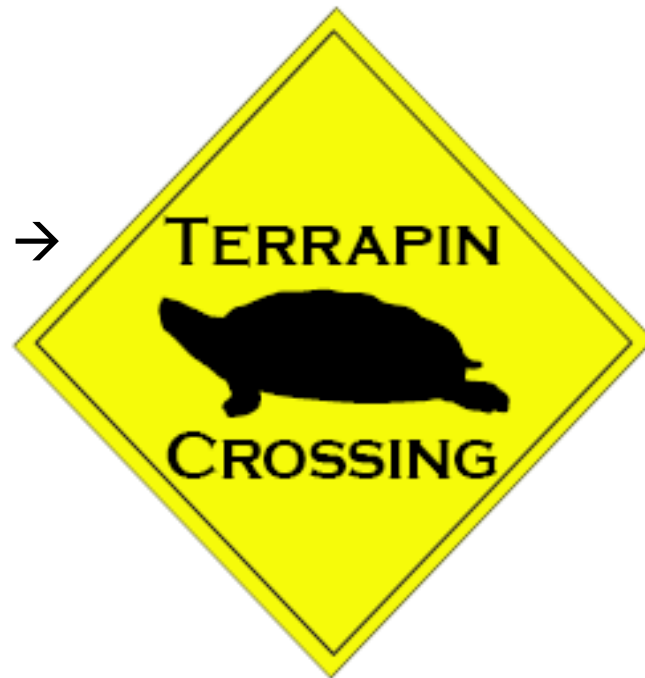


Current Caution Signs



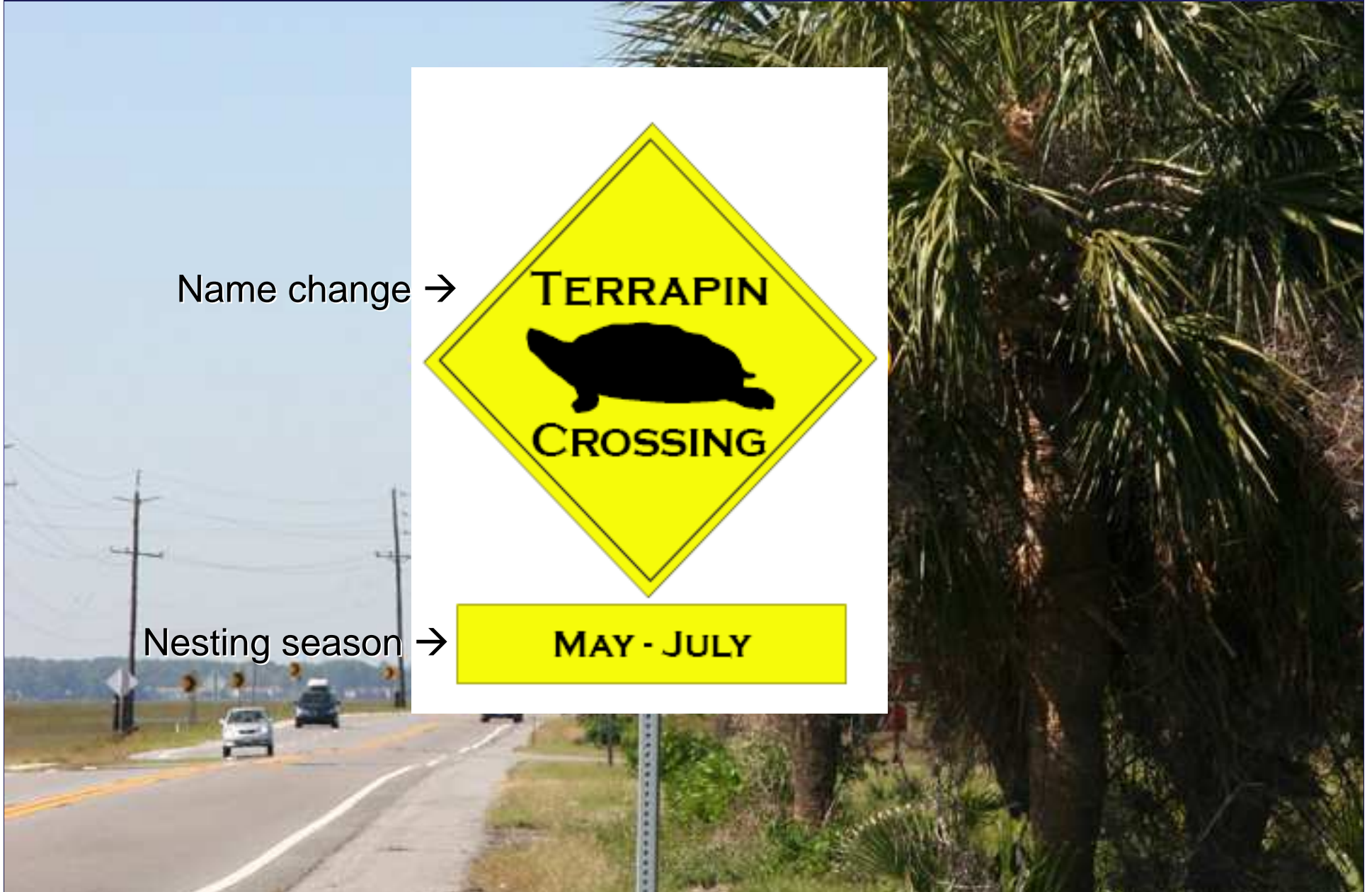
2008 Caution Sign Amendments

Name change →



Nesting season →

MAY - JULY



**“ENTERING TERRAPIN COUNTRY,
PLEASE DRIVE CAUTIOUSLY!”**



Thank you!

- A special thanks to:

→ Dr. Terry Norton, Dr. Kathryn Craven, AASU Project Diamondback volunteers, Meg Hoyle, Suzanne VanParreren, Whitney Jenkins, Mike Dorcas, Colin Gray, Sarah McSpadden, Captain Rene Heidt, Sarah John-Peter, Bartlett Middle School, the Tybee Island Marine Science Center, the Oatland Island Wildlife Center, the entire Diamondback Terrapin Working Group, the Georgia Sea Turtle Center, the St. Catherines Island Center, the Armstrong Atlantic State University, the Georgia Department of Transportation, the Georgia Department of Natural Resources, and the South Carolina Department of Natural Resources

